REMARKS

In the aforenoted office communication, claim 37 was objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, and claims 4, 5, 7, 29, 30 and 32 were indicated as being allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejections thereof under § 112, and to also include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 4 has been cancelled and rewritten in independent form as new claim 41 and claims 5 and 7 have been amended to be dependent from claim 41 rather than claim 4. Claim 29 has been cancelled and rewritten as new independent claim 42 and claims 30 and 32 have been amended to be dependent upon new claim 42 rather than claim 29. Claim 37 has been canceled. The remaining claims which were rejected have been amended as will be discussed hereafter in a manner to be more patentably distinct from the prior art for reasons specified.

Of the rejected claims, only claims 17 and 26 are independent. The remaining claims are dependent either directly or indirectly therefrom. All of the claims rejected on prior art were rejected on various combinations of the patents to Buck et al., Min, Fraczek, Fun and Judkins. The Fraczek, Fun and Judkins references all relate to spools found in window coverings or the like, while the patents to Buck et al. and Min are directed to yarn spools. Of the references relied upon by the examiner, only the yarn spools reference the use of ribbing and none of the references in the art of window coverings reference the use of such ribs.

It is not felt the art of winding yarn on yarn spools is at all related to the art of window coverings for a number of reasons. First of all, yarn is a rather extensible fiber, while lift cords found in window coverings are nonextensible and, therefore, different parameters are considered for accommodating the winding of such materials on spools.

Secondly, persons skilled in the art of window coverings and, particularly, in the lifting and lowering mechanisms for such coverings would not refer to the art of yarn winders or knitting machines and are probably totally unaware of such art. Another distinguishing feature between the art of lift mechanisms for window coverings and yarn winding resides in the fact that when lift cords are wound and unwound from a spool, they are wound and unwound from the same end of the spool. In the field of winding yarn on yarn spools, the yarn is wound at one end of the spool and unwound from the opposite end.

As mentioned above, the only references cited by the examiner disclosing the use of ribs on a winding spool are the yarn winding spools. Such a concept is not known or suggested in the art of lifting mechanisms for window coverings. Accordingly, while applicant does not feel the yarn winding patents are a relevant art to the present invention, applicant has amended independent claims 17 and 26 to further point out the distinction between spools for use in lifting mechanisms for window coverings and those used in yarn winding. More specifically, each of claims 17 and 26 has been amended to state that the lift cord is wound onto and unwound from the same end of the spool, and this, or course, has a bearing on the design of the spool. Since lifting mechanisms for window coverings and yarn spools have different goals insofar as handling the lift cord or the yarn, respectively, it is felt this distinction is pertinent to the present invention, particularly since lift cords wound onto and unwound from the same end would require a different configured spool than a spool used to wind yarn.

Inasmuch as each of the two independent claims remaining in the application has been amended to point out a feature of the present invention not found in the yarn

winding field or the field of lift mechanisms for window coverings and, further, since the yarn winding field is felt to be nonanalogous to the art of lift mechanisms for window coverings, it is felt each of claims 17 and 26 is now patentably distinct from the prior art. Inasmuch as the remaining claims that were rejected by the examiner based on art are dependent directly or indirectly from claims 17 or 26, they are felt to be allowable as well.

Inasmuch as there were no other objections or rejections of the application, and for the reasons set forth above, it is believed all the claims remaining in the application are now in condition for allowance, such action is courteously requested.

Dated this 3rd day of April 2006.

Respectfully submitted,

Gary M. Polumbus, Reg. No. 25,364
USPTO Customer No. 20686
Tel: (303) 628-1500
Fax: (303) 629-3450

GMP/dtc

4833-8992-2560\1